
CERT WILDLAND
URBAN INTERFACE – PART B
THE APPROACHING WILDFIRE!

In this unit you will:

- ✍ **Learn how to Pre-plan for evacuation:** Now that you understand more about Wildland Fires, find out what should be done as the fire threatens your neighborhood.
- ✍ **Understand the Evacuation Notification Procedure:** Often there is a false expectation by the public when it comes to evacuation during a Wildland Fire.
- ✍ **Learn what last minute preparations to take, and the appropriate timing in evacuation:** Now is the time to put your plan into action.
- ✍ **Become familiar with what steps to take if you are trapped:** Learn how to protect yourself if you are unable to evacuate.
- ✍ **Learn About Other Options:** Become familiar with methods of pre-treating your home in advance of the fire, and taking some last steps at removing some of the fuels around your home.



Preplan your Evacuation

- Pre-plan your evacuation routes. There may be pre-established evacuation routes in your area. Find out from your local fire agency if there are. If not, where will you likely evacuate to in the event of a major wildfire?
- Pre-plan at least two evacuation routes out of your neighborhood. How will you know which one to take?
- Roads should accommodate two-way traffic. Narrow roads can cause traffic congestion, leading to panic for those evacuating.

Get Ready

- Make a list of “Important Items” (things that cannot be left behind)
 - Medications, prescriptions, eyeglasses
 - Important documents (birth certificates, tax records, etc.)
 - Photos, art, jewelry and other important mementos
 - Pets, pet food, leash(s), pet carrier(s)

Contractors, Plumbers, Nurses
- Then assemble a “Go Kit” containing the above
- Emergency resources will be limited so build a network of neighbors
 - ✍ Design a Neighborhood “Network” *with who has what skills & equip.*
 - ✍ Develop a neighborhood phone tree
 - ✍ This will help expedite evacuation orders; however the phone system may go down. Design a backup!
 - ✍ Make evacuation pre-plans with those who have special needs in your neighborhood...enlist their help!
- Have an evacuation/transportation plan for horses, livestock, and pets.

Evacuation Procedures:

Evacuation Notification:

- Fire Service Officials call for evacuations
- Law Enforcement carries out evacuation orders via:
 - Patrol cars
 - Helicopters
 - Door to door
- Depending on location and speed of approaching fire, evacuation orders may not reach everyone.
- Neighborhood phone trees can help expedite evacuation orders
- CERT members may be called to activate their local area's evacuation plan
- Working in pairs, team members should assist area residents in an orderly evacuation.
- Stay tuned to local radio stations for messages from the County's Emergency Alert System (EAS).

Evacuation:

- ☞ Know when to go:
 - When wildfire threatens...put your plan into action.
 - Activate your neighborhood phone tree & *your family contact*
 - Gather your family, pets & "important items"
 - If time permits, prepare your home.

If at any time you feel threatened... GO!



✍ Before you go: IF THERE'S TIME, PREPARE YOUR HOME

- Close all windows and doors
- Shut off air conditioning & heating units
- Close fireplace doors & damper, if possible
- Move furniture & draperies/curtains away from windows
- Move combustibles & fire wood away from home's exterior
- Shut off the gas meter or propane tank
- Turn all the lights on in your home
- Back your car into the garage and turn off the engine
- Leave keys in the ignition
- Keep garage door(s) closed until you are ready to leave
- Disconnect electric garage door(s) from the motor
- Disconnect motor on automatic gates
- Leave manual gates open & unlocked
- Fill trash cans and buckets with water, leave around exterior of house
- Soak rags, towels and small rugs in water to help extinguish small embers
- Attach garden hoses to spigots outside

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- Place a ladder against the house, opposite from where fire is approaching
- As you are preparing to leave, stay tuned to radio and TV stations for updated instructions and information

IF THERE'S TIME:

Use a fire-resistive material (like plywood) to cover up a home's vulnerable areas:

- Eave vents
- Sub-floor vents
- Roof vents
- Windows

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Prepare your home! Advanced training is needed!

Consult with your local fire authority to see if they support this training.

ONLY if you are TRAINED & EQUIPPED take the steps below:

- ✍ Limb-up and/or drop trees.
- ✍ Remove combustible fencing to prevent fire from reaching buildings.
- ✍ Apply "special treatments" (like gel or foam) to buildings right before you evacuate.

Remember, for these steps Advanced training is needed!

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Does your area have a specially trained Animal Rescue Team? Some communities do, and they can assist!

Evacuate large animals early:

- If you have horses, be sure you own trailers for them.
- Know how to drive a truck with trailer.
- Trailer-train your horses.

EVACUATE

Most wildfire-related injuries and deaths occur during evacuation efforts.

During an evacuation you can expect

- ✍ Heavy smoke
- ✍ Flying embers/fire brands
- ✍ High volume of cars and trailers
- ✍ Panicked drivers
- ✍ Abandoned vehicles

Evacuate EARLY... the earlier the better.

- Review your “special needs” plan
 - Does a neighbor need your assistance?
 - Are your pets ready to go?
- Close your garage door behind you
- Leave all access gates open
- Drive safely and cautiously
- Keep headlights on and windows rolled up

IF YOU CAN NOT EVACUATE:

Trapped at home:

- Stay inside your home; it's safer than being outside or in a vehicle.
- Close all exterior doors (including garage door *after* putting the car inside).
- Stay calm, initiate contact with your out-of-state relative.
- Call your local emergency number (i.e., 911) and inform the dispatcher that you can't evacuate.
- Fill sinks and bathtubs with water
- Shelter in rooms opposite the approaching fire
- Stay away from perimeter walls
- Close all interior doors, leaving them unlocked
- Stay as calm as you can, keep your family together
- Fire-fronts can take 5 to 15 minutes *or longer* to pass

As hot as it gets inside your home, it is many times hotter outside!



IF YOU CAN NOT EVACUATE:

Trapped in your car:

- Try to drive to an area clear of vegetation, away from wires and trees
- Close all windows and keep doors unlocked
- Turn on A/C in “re-circulation” or “max” mode
- Lie on the floor
- Cover yourself with a wool or cotton blanket or jacket
- Attempt to call your local emergency number
- Wait for the fire front to pass

KEEP IN MIND:

- ✍ There will be smoke in your car
- ✍ After the fire front passes, if you see flames in your vehicle, wrap yourself in clothing/blankets and exit the vehicle.

Do not attempt to out-run a wildfire!



AFTER THE FIRE PASSES:

Thoroughly check you home, yard, roof and attic for fire or smoldering embers.

Use a hose or fire extinguisher to extinguish any “hot spots”

- Keep the doors and windows closed
- Continue rechecking your home and yard for at least 12 hours
- Update your out-of-state family contact of your status

OTHER OPTIONS:

Shelter in Place

- Pre-established “safe zones:” *Predetermined*
 - Areas where residents can safely gather until the emergency subsides, such as parks, golf courses, parking lots, etc.
- Neighborhoods designed to shelter citizens in their homes during a wildfire:
 - Specific fire-resistive construction and landscape features must be in place

Contact your local Fire Authority to find out if they support shelter in place!

The Stay and Defend Concept:

- To be considered only as a last resort
- *Remember*, each year professionally trained firefighters are killed while fighting wildfires.
- Citizens perish during these events.
- If you are considering staying behind, ***and your local fire agency supports this***, advanced training is a must!

To survive, you must be *trained and equipped*

Stay and Defend continued

- **Make an informed decision based on:**
 - Your training level
 - Your physical abilities
 - The known fire conditions
 - Past fire history in the area, and
 - The advice of your local emergency services
- **Dress appropriately:**
 - Wear long sleeves, long pants (cotton or wool) and closed-toe shoes.
NO SYNTHETICS!
- **Keep a level head – try to remain calm.**

SUMMARY

An approaching wildfire presents an extremely dangerous situation!

- Have realistic expectations of the capabilities of firefighters and law enforcement
- Design a plan for evacuation; develop a “neighborhood network”
- Practice your evacuation plan and know how to prepare your home before you leave
- Make educated decisions on when to evacuate and how to use other options.

Student Notes

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